

# WARNING LABEL: A Quarterly Update On The Goals And Successes Of The Department Of Health Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

Winter 2000 Volume I Number 1

I n a u g u r a l I s s u e

## Department of Health Launches Tobacco Control Program

Recognizing the need for a hard-hitting advertising campaign to turn the heads of youth across the state, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) launched its Tobacco Prevention and Control program by rolling out a \$4 million public awareness campaign that shows people the real consequences of tobacco use.

Flooding audiences with images that are both emotionally and visually unnerving, the television and radio ad campaigns have not only turned heads, but created a buzz among audiences of all ages. The response from Washington residents who saw or heard the striking television and radio placements was exceedingly positive. DOH even received calls from residents across the state crediting the ads with their decision to quit using tobacco.

The ads used in this campaign were selected from the top anti-smoking advertisements in the country, not only proving to be effective in their states of origin, but in focus groups across Washington state. DOH placed the ads during peak youth viewing and listening hours, including the morning and evening commute and primetime television. This first round of advertising was followed with an overlapping outdoor media campaign, and



Stills from Pam Laffin television spot.

will be accompanied with new creative materials generated specifically for Washington state after the first of the year.

Nonetheless, this innovative advertising campaign is only one part of the strategic approach designed by DOH. Additional Tobacco Prevention and Control program components such as community- and school-based programs and cessation resources, are currently being tailored to, and implemented in, cities and counties throughout Washington state. The Tobacco Quit Line successfully launched on November 15 to an enthusiastic reception from Washington state tobacco users. DOH has developed a variety of new creative tools and resources to aid in the effort to curb tobacco use that will be launched in the coming year.

DOH credits the success of the Tobacco Prevention and Control program in part to an overall effort from state contractors, legislators and advocates who have played an important role – and tirelessly assisted DOH – in the development and launch of this program. DOH is very pleased with the success achieved to date and hopes to continue the same positive response as the program moves forward. ♣

## Pull Your Video Off the Shelf

In October, the Department of Health sent a launch packet to all local contractors, which included a VHS copy of campaign television spots. Don't let your copy sit on the shelf. Try getting the "Mommy's Crying" ad placed on local cable stations. It is the only ad designated for use as a public service announcement (PSA). The other ads may be placed on in-school television stations, or used at health fairs and community events. If you have been successful at getting the ads placed in your community, or are using the tapes in presentations and special events, we would love to know about it. Please let us know of any placements that you have secured. If you have questions about use of the television ads at the local level, contact Lisa LaFond at 360-236-3634. ♣

## Pam Laffin: A Heroine Lost

Pam Laffin, whose seven-year struggle with emphysema was featured in a television ad here in Washington, died at the end of October. Laffin, who was only weeks away from receiving her second lung transplant, was an

integral part of the anti-tobacco movement. She told her story at speaking opportunities and through public awareness messages, using her experience to raise the consciousness of smokers across the nation. Laffin's ad is a part of the public awareness

campaign launched statewide in October.

"Pam was truly a wonderful person who gave everything she had to educating the people of this country to the dangers of smoking. Her enthusiasm, spirit and determination will be missed," said

Secretary of Health, Mary Selecky.

For now, the Department of Health will continue to air the ad featuring Laffin as a part of our strategy to prevent youth from ever starting to use tobacco. ♣

# Quit Line Offers Tobacco Users Helping Hand

Admitting you need help isn't always easy. The Department of Health (DOH) recognized this fact when developing its program to help Washington state tobacco users kick the habit. A toll-free tobacco Quit Line, using a proven method of cessation counseling, was launched on November 15. The Quit Line launched with a massive publicity push through television, radio and print media, as well as a grassroots effort taking Quit Line posters right into the areas where people congregate to

smoke. The Quit Line was presented to tobacco users as a

To date, the Washington Quit Line received over 2,000 calls, more

The Department of Health has also set up separate Quit Line numbers to assist spanish speaking and hearing impaired callers in their efforts to quit.

1-877-270-STOP  
1-877-NO-FUME - Spanish  
1-877-777-6534 - TTY

helping hand in the quitting process, a gesture that was enthusiastically received by smokers in Washington.

than any other state quit line during the given time period. Group Health Cooperative, the organization managing

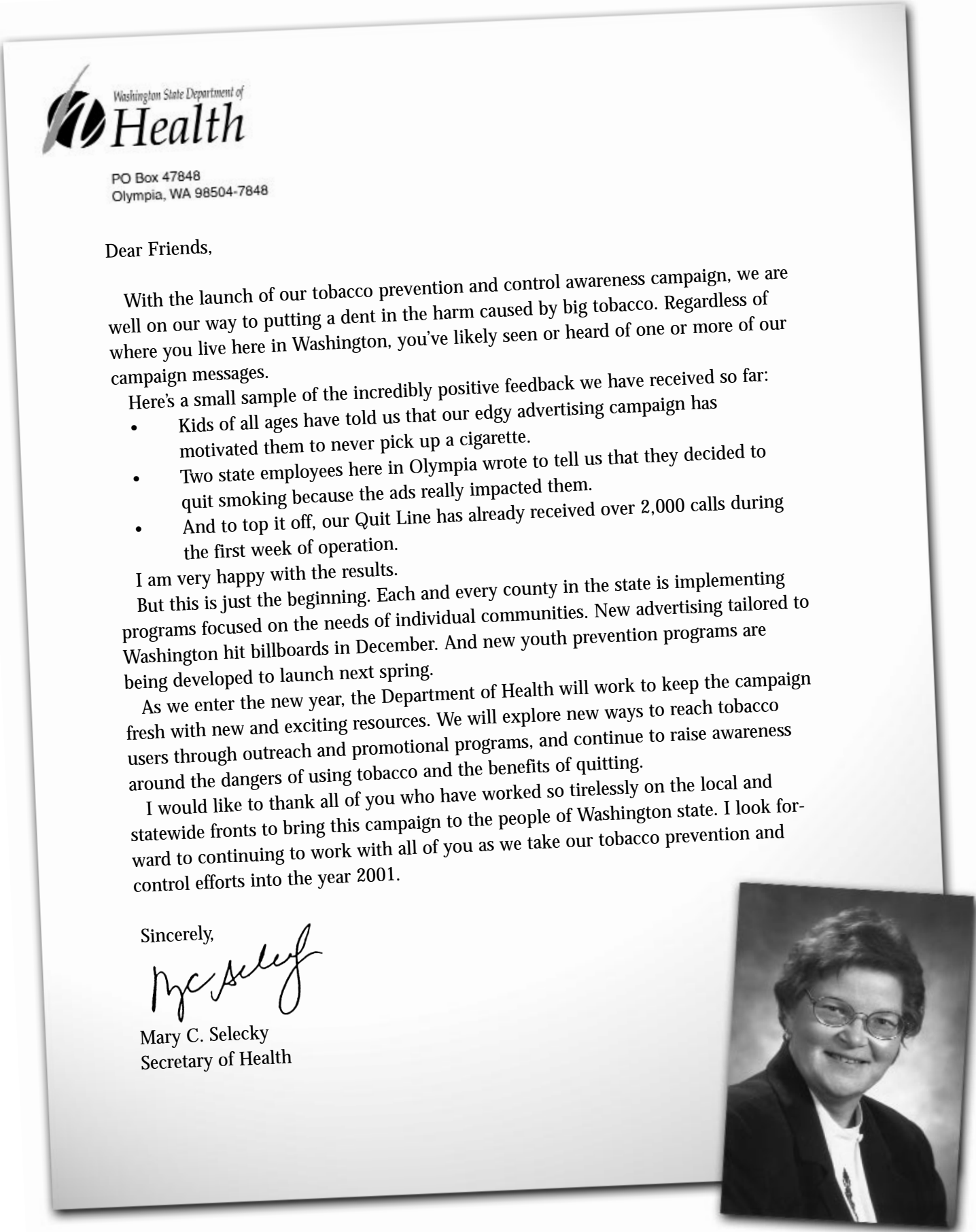
the Quit Line, credits the large response directly to the strategic way in which DOH targeted tobacco users – offering a helping hand, not a hammer. Cessation specialists at Group Health have also noted the unparalleled readiness and responsiveness of Washington callers to receiving help from the Quit Line.

“A majority of the callers are ready to get help quitting when they place the call, and have been grateful for the resource,” said Tim McAfee medical director for Washington's Quit Line and executive director of the Center for Health Promotion, Group Health Cooperative.

A month after the launch of the Quit Line, Group Health continues to receive a steady stream of calls and positive response to this new state resource. Group Health will monitor the effectiveness of the Quit Line by conducting routine follow-up calls with a cross section of Quit Line callers 12 months after their initial call. At that time, Group Health representatives will ascertain how long the caller has been tobacco-free and determine their satisfaction with the Quit Line process. A report of the response will be given to DOH.

DOH will continue its promotional efforts of the Quit Line through television and outdoor advertising.

Based on the program's successful launch and continued promotional push, the Quit Line is well on its way to achieving DOH's target goal of 12,000 callers by June 2001. 🍀





# Local Spotlight: Southwest Washington Health District Garnerers Great Media

This issue's Local Spotlight is on the Southwest Washington Health District (SWWHD), whose local effort surrounding the Tobacco Quit Line launch resulted in tremendous media coverage and several ongoing community programs.

Television news coverage presents a unique challenge to SWWHD. The nearly 400,000 residents of Clark and Skamania Counties receive their television coverage from stations based in Portland, OR. Consequently, their news coverage is not driven by Washington state events, but rather by events occurring in the state of Oregon. Therefore, SWWHD and community partners created an interesting, localized story that succeeded in generating wide spread media coverage of the Quit Line launch.

SWWHD has played an active role in the Great American Smoke Out for the past 10 years. This year, the health district joined

forces with Community Choices 2010 to create a Great American Smoke Out workgroup. Meeting bi-weekly, the group created targeted events and publicity around both the Great American Smoke Out and the Quit Line, which launched the day before.

The Quit Line was publicized by utilizing local outlets, including *The Fax Times*, a one-page newsletter distributed to more than 2,000 offices in Clark County, which reaches between 35,000 and 40,000 working adults. Recognizing the opportunity to reach tobacco users in their workplace environment, SWWHD acquired discounted advertising space in *The Fax Times* for the 10 days leading up to the Quit Line launch. Featuring cartoon cels from one of the Washington Quit Line television ads, SWWHD ran one cel a day up to and on the day of the Quit Line launch when they revealed the toll-free cessation number.

The health district then held a successful press conference for the Quit Line launch on November 15. Looking to personalize the event for Washington and Oregon media, SWWHD invited a local celebrity, Clark County Commissioner and Board of Health member Craig Pridemore, to participate. Pridemore, a twenty-year smoker who has made numerous attempts to quit in the past, placed a call to the Quit Line on speakerphone for members of the press. At the event, the health district displayed its new, television-friendly Quit Line banner and distributed its revised community cessation program brochure. Both the brochures and banner are in high demand, and will see continued use in Clark County.

SWWHD's press conference resulted in tremendous media coverage, with three television and two radio stations, two newspapers and an Associated Press reporter in attendance.

SWWHD went on to hold one of Clark County's most successful Great American Smoke Outs in recent memory. Special features this year included two attention-grabbing publicity tactics. "Ciggy Buttz," a costumed character, directed tobacco users to the local YMCA where they received free coffee, bagels and a Quit Kit. In addition, more than 200 mock tombstones were set up at two different locations. The tombstones, made of painted plywood and mounted on stakes, represented the 8,000 people who die each year in Washington due to tobacco-related illnesses. Throughout the Great American Smoke Out, the SWWHD continued to publicize the Quit Line number.

Congratulations to the Southwest Washington Health District for their tremendous efforts and success. The Department of Health is truly grateful for all of your hard work on the local front. 🍏

## Taking Tobacco Message to the Streets

It's becoming more difficult for Washington tobacco users to ignore the messages sent by the Department of Health (DOH) on the dangers of tobacco. In addition to television and radio ads broadcast state-wide, DOH has purchased outdoor advertising space on buses, billboards, mall kiosks and in movie theaters across the state.

The outdoor campaign began with advertising in movie theaters just as the industry entered its peak holiday season on the week of November 17. As moviegoers attended holiday blockbusters over Thanksgiving and Christmas, they were confronted with anti-smoking messages centered on movie

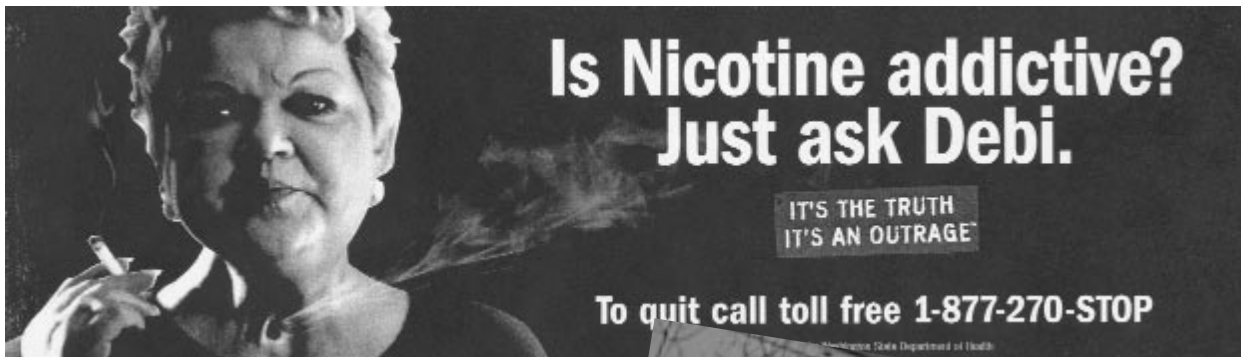
themes. Theaters provide a unique opportunity to reach kids. They are a venue where youth are typically exposed to images that portray smoking as cool and sexy, an ideal counter-advertising opportunity.

Transit and billboard advertising were launched in December with variations of the television ads featuring Debi, Zack and

Brian. The ads send a hard hitting message about the addictive nature of tobacco and the impact on the families of tobacco users. These ads will run through June 2001.

Mall kiosk materials will appear the first of January in select retail malls with shopping and fashion centered messages. The posters, which are aimed at youth, sport such catch phrases as, "Nothing is more out of fashion than smoking."

Through this aggressive outdoor push, DOH hopes to target youth who can be prevented from picking up the habit, and current tobacco users who are thinking about quitting. All outdoor, mall and movie theater advertising have the Quit Line number predominantly displayed for tobacco users who decide to quit and need a helping hand. 🍏



Billboard ads of "Debi" and "Zack."



coming

EVENTS:

Statewide Tobacco Contractors Meeting  
May 1-3, 2001  
Sea-Tac area  
(tentative)

World No Tobacco Day  
May 31, 2001

2nd Annual Youth Tobacco Summit  
June 2001  
(date to be announced)

Beginning of new fiscal year  
July 1, 2001

# State's Building Owners Get the Word Out

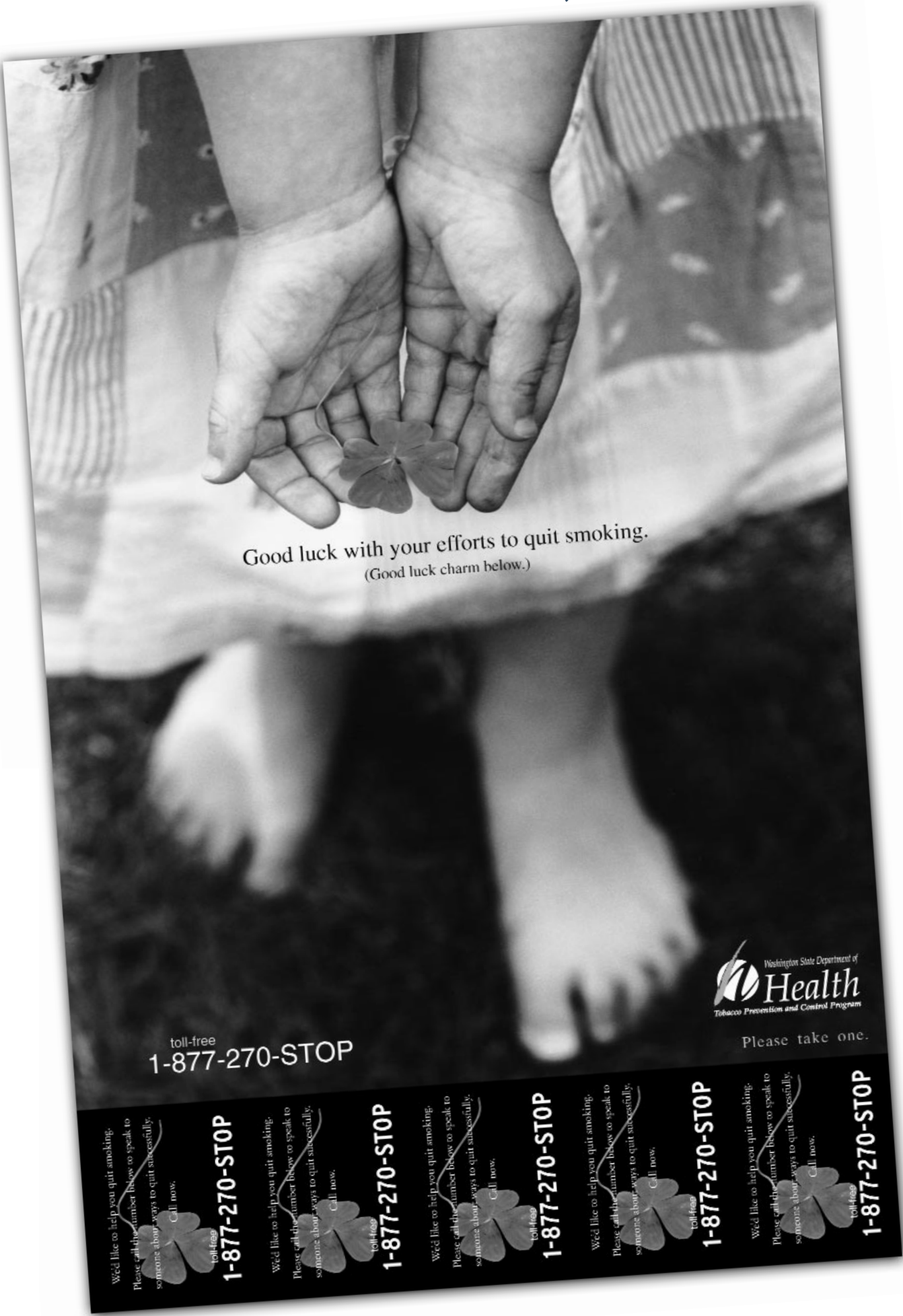
Working to promote the state's new Quit Line, the Department of Health (DOH) took its message right to the places where smokers congregate to smoke. Recognizing these areas as an effective place to reach smokers who might be considering quitting, DOH developed posters offering a helping hand in the quitting process. DOH then partnered with building owners and managers across the state to hang the posters in and around their buildings.

Seattle, Spokane and Tacoma chapters of the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) were among the program's participants, offering more than 400 buildings in eastern and western Washington where Quit Line posters could be posted. DOH also formed partnerships with city and county municipal buildings across the state in an attempt to reach public employees and building users.

In total, more than 2,500 posters were distributed, bringing DOH's message to smokers in the work-

place. This partnership program is one of a number of promotional efforts surrounding the Quit Line. 🍀

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Change Service Requested



The Washington State Tobacco Prevention and Control program is funded by the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement between Washington state and major tobacco companies. In a commitment to curb tobacco use within the state, Governor Gary Locke and the state legislature dedicated all of the tobacco settlement funds to programs that protect and improve the health of Washington state citizens. Washington was the first state to take this step.

In addition, the Department of Health created a sustainable, long-term, comprehensive tobacco control program aimed at preventing and reducing smoking and other tobacco use.

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